



U.S. Soldiers, IPs and ING Soldiers provide security during march of Shiite Muslims to the Kadhamiyah Shrine.
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Soldiers of the 2-82 FA reach a milestone by logging half a million miles traveled during convoy operations.
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Horse Detachment Soldiers instruct Iraqi horse handlers on horse care and training techniques with Saddam Hussein's former horses.
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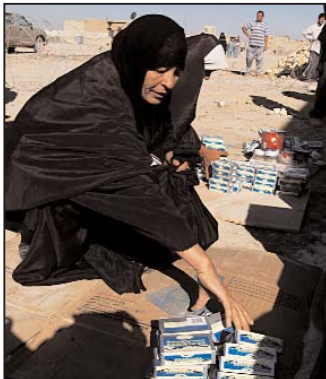
Cav Country

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"Telling the First Team's Story"

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478th CA Brings Humanitarian Aid to Iraqis



Photos by Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD
(Above) A woman from the Al-Tamar district of Baghdad places cans of sardines into her burka to carry home. The sardines were part of a non-perishable food items humanitarian relief drop put together by local leaders and Soldiers of the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion, 1-12 Cav, 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div. Sept. 14. (Right) Sgt. 1st Class Felipe Azua (right) and Sgt. Gregory Glading, both of the 478th CA Bn., carry a bag of beans to be loaded on the back of an LMTV (Light Multi Task Vehicle) prior to delivering food to the Al-Tamar district of Baghdad. See story on page 14.



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

Emergency Blood Drive Saves the Life of a Soldier Following Extensive Surgery

By Spc. Jan Critchfield
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- As surgeons of the 31st Combat Army Surgical Hospital concentrated on the 1st Cavalry Division Soldier spread on the operating table before them September 20, midnight approached and time was running out.

Time was not measured on a clock that night; it was measured by the pints of blood that flowed onto the operating room floor as the surgeons struggled to undo the destruction caused by the round of an insurgent AK-47.

"We have a Soldier who was shot in the abdomen," Maj. Nancy Parson, 31st CASH night shift nursing supervisor said, "He lost a lot of blood, greater than 2000 cc's."

When the Fort Bliss, Texas-based CASH's surgeons were done stabilizing the critically wounded Soldier, whose identity is being withheld pending notification of family members, it became apparent

A 1st Cavalry Division Soldier donates during a blood drive held to stockpile what was needed to get a critically injured division trooper through the night following extensive surgery at the 31st Combat Army Surgical Hospital.

that more blood would be needed if the Soldier was to make it through the night.

"He required several transfusions," Parson said. "We used the entire stockpile [of blood] here at the CASH, then we initiated a whole blood drive."

Calls requesting volunteers were made to several other U.S. Army units near the International Zone-based CASH, a fortified area that houses key components of the new Iraqi government as well as most of the 1st Cavalry Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team.

The turnout of volunteers was unprecedented. Humvees, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, and other vehicles lined the street outside of the CASH, while busses and other on-hand vehicles ferried more potential donors to the doorstep of the CASH throughout the hours of night.

"This is the largest turnout of volunteers to donate blood that we've ever had," Parson said.

"I have a list of all of the donors and everyone's blood type that is assigned to the CASH," Parson said. "Depending on how many units we need, I may just go and get people around the CASH and get them to donate."

See **BLOOD**, Page 12

Ramadan Observances Stress Piety, Sacrifice

By Sgt. 1st Class Tony Sailer
122nd MPAD

For more than a billion Muslims around the world—including some 22 million in Iraq—Ramadan is a "month of blessing" marked by prayer, fasting, and charity. It is an observance that retains its focus on self-sacrifice and devotion to Allah (God).

Ramadan, the third Pillar of Islam, is observed during the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and as with all Islamic months, follows the lunar calendar. The first day of Ramadan is determined by the sighting of the new crescent. Muslim scholars and clergymen do not acknowledge astronomical calculations to determine the beginning of lunar months, but rather depend on the detection of the crescent by visual means. This practice is somewhat unpredictable so there is no way to accurately detect the first day of Ramadan. This year, it is predicted to fall on Friday the 16th of October.

The holy month of Ramadan is considered the holiest of all months to Muslims. It is the month in which Muslims believe that God revealed the first revelations of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad through the angel Gabriel.

During Ramadan, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset every day. The fast requires every Muslim to abstain from drinking, eating, smoking, sex, and any other type of indulgence or sin, including speaking obscene words. Shiites and Sunnis both observe the month of Ramadan. Many Muslims who do not normally pray or who do not follow all of the rules set in the Qur'an may become pious during Ramadan, in a belief that observing Ramadan perfectly will erase their past sins.

Many will stay up all night in prayer or reading the Qur'an, sometimes in groups.

The two important meals in Ramadan are: Iftar (Breaking of the fast), which takes place at sunset after the Maghrib call to prayer, and Suhur, which takes place shortly before sunrise. Shortly before the sunset prayers, the streets will be completely jammed with traffic.

As people get to prayer sites a few minutes before the call for sunset prayers, the streets will again be empty. Around 90 minutes after iftar, traffic starts again and socializing and visits to the mosques begin.

Personal piety is more intense during the month of Ramadan. Muslims will openly admonish those that they see as not abiding by the rules, including US Forces. Open admonition by a fasting Muslim is not necessarily a sign of hostility, but can be sometimes a sign of affection. The Muslim may admonish you because he fears for the safety of your soul.

At the end of the month, the sighting of the moon's crescent signals the beginning of the month of Shawwal, and the beginning of the three-day 'Id-al-Fitr (Holiday of the breaking of the fast). Muslims enjoy being able to eat and drink during the day. Most business comes to a complete halt during these three days. Muslims will visit their relatives. Gifts of money and clothing will be given to the children of the extended family and the children of friends.

During the three days of 'Id-al-Fitr, gifts of money to the children is not a bad idea. The amount should not be too much. Preferably the money should be given to the child in the presence of the parents. A small envelope congratulating the population on the month is not a bad idea. Chocolates and other small symbolic gifts are likely to be well received.

NEW FOB NAMES

OLD NAME	NEW NAME (ARABIC)	(ENGLISH)
IRON HORSE	AL-WATANI	PATRIOT
EAGLE	AL-AMAL	HOPE
SOUTH VICTORY	AL-NASR	VICTORY
HIGHLANDER	AL-ISDEHAR	PROSPERITY
HEADHUNTER	AL-ISTIQUAL	INDEPENDANCE
FERRIN-HUGGINS	AL-SAGR	FALCON
WARHORSE	AL-HURYA AL-AWAL	FREEDOM I
GREYWOLF	AL-TAWHEED AL-AWAL	UNION I
CUERVO	RUSTAMIYAH	RUSTAMIYAH
NORTH VICTORY	AL-TAHREER	LIBERTY
BANZAI	AL-ADALA	JUSTICE
STEEL DRAGON	AL-SHARAF	HONOR
COOKE	TAJI	TAJI
GUNSLINGER	AL-TADAMUN	SOLIDARITY
OUTLAW	AL-HURYA AL-THANI	FREEDOM II
WARRIOR	AL-TAWHEED AL-THANI	UNION II
TROJAN HORSE	AL-TAWHEED AL-THALITH	UNION III

FOB Name Changes Official

By Sgt. John Queen
3rd BCT Public Affairs

American Soldiers from Operation Iraqi Freedom I.

Baghdad-- Name changes for forward operating bases and camps used by American forces in Baghdad took effect Sept. 15.

Task force leaders have renamed all of the forward operating bases and camps in Baghdad.

Originally the bases were named after unit nicknames like Headhunter and Bulldog. Three are named in honor of fallen

"We are guests here to support the people of Iraq with security and rebuilding," Maj. Gregory Mogavero, an information officer assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division headquarters, said. "These are not U.S. bases, the land belongs to the Iraqis and the legacy left by this operation should be on of Iraqi services and not U.S. spirit."

At the entrance to each FOB, the signs will have the new names in both Arabic and English.

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Public Affairs Officer:
Lt. Col. James Hutton
122 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment Commander:
Maj. John Fuhrman
Public Affairs Supervisor:
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Spur & The Moment

Photos by Spc. Anthony Farr, 39th Bde. IO

"How do you deal with the stress of being deployed?"

"I deal with stress by calling my family and writing in my journal. I also try to stay busy."



2nd Lt. Holly Segura
HSC 615 ASB Co.

"I deal with stress by writing to myself, and hanging out with my friends. I call my family a lot and look at my photos from home."



Spc. Genevieve Valentine,
A Co. 118th Med. Co.

"I deal with stress by doing my job and emailing home. The ability to talk to my family by phone and laughing a lot with my co-workers helps also."



1st Lt. Steven Knight
449th AG Co.

"I don't really have any stress to deal with because the stress is back home. I have the easy job."



1st Sgt. Rafael Pena
368th Cargo Trans Co.

"I deal with stress by taking it day by day and doing what the mission asks of me. It helps make the days go by fast. I also call home every other day to my family."



Pfc. Wayne Campbell
659th Maintenance Co.

"I deal with stress by going to the MWR and playing pool and dancing on the weekends. I also hang out with my friends from my company."



Pfc. Holly Short
151st Postal Co.

Cav. Improves Power Distribution in Baghdad

By Capt. Jill Caliri
8th Engineer Battalion

BAGHDAD-- The 8th Engineer Battalion and the neighborhood of Zafaraniya celebrated the completion of the first major infrastructure project a 33 kilovolt electrical line from Baghdad South Power plant to the Asbast Substation.

The line greatly improves electrical service to Zafaraniya and Sindibad and provides electricity to neighborhoods that did not have it before.

Zafaraniya has been a focus area for the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, according to 8th ENG Commander Lt. Col. Brian Dosa.

"It immediately struck us as an area that had been neglected by the former regime," he said. "We saw the linkage between the very poor services and the fact it was a hotbed for anti-Iraqi force operations. We tried to attack the problem with conventional military operations as well as shaping operations by improving infrastructure and basic services."

The first step of the project was installing support poles across the three kilometer stretch so the lines could be strung high to prevent vandalism and line tapping, a common problem in all of Baghdad.

The lines double the power output of the substation, significantly boosting electricity to the neighborhoods serviced. The project took nearly three months, costing \$145,000 and employing 50 local laborers.

The completion of this project comes at a time when the people of Baghdad are tired and want electricity restored. For every



Local laborers work to install power lines that will serve the Baghdad neighborhood of Zafaraniya as a part of a Multi-National Force project designed to increase power distribution in the area.
By Capt. James Eagleeye, 8th Engineer Battalion

three hours the power is on in Zafaraniya, it is off for the next three, affecting quality of life in the area. In a place where temperatures reach over 120 degrees, being without fans and air conditioning can be unbearable. Polls of Baghdad residents list electricity as the number one frustration, even over the security situation.

Multi-National Forces, alongside the new interim Iraqi government, are working

hard to improve power generation and distribution. Years of neglect to infrastructure outside of the living area of supporters to former Iraqi dictator Sadaam Hussein have left most in Baghdad with unreliable electrical service, broken sewer systems, contaminated drinking water and a build up of trash.

The 8th engineers are working with local leaders to improve the situation in the Karkh and Karadah districts of Baghdad.

Infrastructure projects, such as the power line installed in Zafaraniya, are the engineer's focus. Since arriving in April they have completed more than \$4.3 million in such projects, with many more large projects planned.

Dosa said that the engineers' efforts have been successful, making the area safer for Multi-National Forces and local residents.

1-9 Cav. 'Blackhawks' Start the Long Trek Home

By Spc. Jan Critchfield
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- The Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment "Blackhawks" are on their way back to Texas after fulfilling a year of duty that included fighting near Fallujah as well as time spent in Baghdad's International Zone.

Normally a Bradley Fighting Vehicle company, the Blackhawks traded their tracks for the wheels of humvees and left several months in advance of the rest of the 1st Cavalry Division, the bulk of which was deployed in February of 2004.

"We deployed here as a completely separate company," said 1st Lt. Randall Crowder, the Blackhawk company's executive officer. "We were originally a Bradley company before we changed over to a mechanized, wheeled unit."

Arriving in Iraq in September 2003, the Blackhawks spent several months serving with the 82nd Airborne under the 1st Infantry Division, and later with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Unit. Facing almost daily engagements with anti-Iraqi forces, the Blackhawks conducted raids and patrols in several vil-

lages near Fallujah and captured several large caches of weapons.

"We were the backbone of the maneuver element for [our battalion], so the [operations] tempo was high," Crowder said.

On May 27 the Blackhawks rejoined the First Team in Baghdad.

"I think some of the Soldiers had thought the [1st Cav. Div.] just forgot about us," B l a c k h a w k Commander Capt. Adontis Atkins said. "But, the reception we received coming to [Baghdad] was great."

"The [First Team] looked out for us," said Staff Sgt. Kentraill Stokes, Blackhawks' fire support non-commissioned officer. "They gave us about one day's notice."

One day was all the Blackhawks needed to pack up and move to Baghdad, with skilled leadership and hard-working Soldiers making it possible, Stokes said.

As a combat hardened unit, the

easy life of the International Zone contrasted with what the Blackhawks were used to.

"In the International Zone ... we've had an opportunity to see and hear about the great things [the Multi-National Forces are] doing in the big picture," Atkins said. "Instead of thinking every Iraqi was trying to kill them, the [Soldiers] get to see that there are some Iraqis that are grateful that we're here."

Atkins said the move to Baghdad will help the Soldiers transition to life back home with their families. "Coming into the International Zone helped us transition from combat operations," Atkins said. "It'll help the troops transition back to life in the states. I'm truly thankful that the First Team was able to pull us back [to the International Zone], put their arms around us, and send us home."

Contrary to what Atkins expected, the Blackhawks weren't as excited as

one might think about getting out of a combat zone, at least on the outside.

"It's a little more somber than I expected, now that we're going home. I thought they'd be jumping around, and excited," he said. "We're ready to go home, though. You could put a mountain in front of us, and we'll move it, if it means we go home."

Clearing the final part of a deployment to Baghdad, the Blackhawks spoke with mental health specialists about getting back into the home life they left behind one year ago.

"I think it won't be too hard [to adjust]," Crowder said. "A few of the mental health guys came here and talk with us about coming home and having expectations of our family, and expectations of what we want to do, and to understand that a lot of the wives have a certain way of doing things that we've missed out on. Things have moved on without you. I think that scares some [Soldiers], but for the most part people are just excited."

The Blackhawks flew out of Baghdad Sept. 7, saying goodbye to the world they've known for the last year of their lives, saying hello to a future in the country that represents the freedom they have fought for.



Ensuring Safety at a Moment's Notice

By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- Prior to any battle, command and control elements devise plans and objectives for the mission. As that mission evolves, finely- detailed plans change and a commander must make new decisions quickly. Squad leaders are responsible for implementing those changes on the field, and must be able to execute orders and command their troops without a moment's hesitation.

It's 4:45 a.m. and Staff Sgt. Oracio Pena, 2nd squad leader, 1st Platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion 5th Cavalry Regiment, walks among his squad performing pre-combat checks and inspections as he informs his Soldiers of the objective to the pending mission. He drills the knowledge into each team member, asking them to repeat back to him what was said, ensuring the mission is understood and giving time for any questions that might exist.

"One of my jobs as a squad leader is to make sure that each and everyone of these guys knows exactly what is expected of them," said the Hillsborough, Texas native. "[And] that if something should happen to the leadership above them, they could carry on the mission."

The squad mounts up and moves out. Barely two hours into the mission word gets passed down that the objective has changed. Fighting the loud noise and crowded confines of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, Pena looks each of his squad members in the eye and makes sure they understand the changed mission. The Bradley comes to a halt, the ramp drops and the team executes its new mission.

"You have to try and stay one step ahead of the enemy," he said. "So when we dismount I'm looking for elevated positions, I'm assessing lanes of fire and many other considerations before I place my squad into position."

Like a traffic cop directing a

busy intersection, Pena assigns each Soldier a position for which they are responsible and he tells them what location they are to take if they come under fire.

"There's been a couple times out here that the whole mission has changed on us in like five minutes," Pena said. "We start out with a dismounted patrol to talk to people and all of sudden we're taking fire and engaging the [Muqtada] Militia. So you always have to be alert and flexible; ready for anything to happen."

As his squad remounts their vehicle, Pena takes account of each Soldier and the sensitive items they are carrying.

"Along with everything else you have to think about, you've got to make sure you come back with what you left [with]," he said.

Equally important to their role on the battlefield, the squad leader is responsible for the morale and welfare of the troops in their charge.

It's the seventh day of Operation Iron Fury II. The Soldiers of Company A, 2-5 Cav. are tired. They've run anywhere between two to three missions a day often performing the same tasks in the same areas they've patrolled since their arrival in early March. They haven't showered since the operation began.

"You got to make sure these guys are changing their socks to avoid blisters and fungus growth, that they're getting enough to eat, that they're shaving every day and just doing the basic hygiene things that become so critical once you've been in the field for an extended amount of time," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Mercado, 3rd squad leader, 1st Platoon, Company A, 2-5 Cav.

Along with physical well being, a Soldier's mental fitness is among the many things for which a squad leader must be aware.

"You've really got to know your guys, so you can tell when something isn't quite right," Mercado said. "It could be anything, issues on the home front, not getting enough rest, or having



Photos by Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

(Above) Staff Sgt. Oracio Pena, 2nd squad leader, 1st Platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division indicates to his squad which building they would occupy in the event they came under fire during Operation Iron Fury II.

been on too many missions. If you know you're guys, you know what to look for. You see the difference in how they act or carry themselves. It takes time and it's not something that comes overnight, but as a squad leader it's something you work for all the time."

Mercado and Pena both agreed that developing rotation schedules to enable proper down time was key in keeping Soldiers mentally sharp and focused on the mission.

"By virtue of the fact that I out-rank the guys in my squad, they have to listen to the orders that I give them," Mercado said. "But to me the real challenge and mark of a good leader, is to have these guys respect me as a person that happens to be their squad leader."



(Above) After having guaranteed his troops have established a security rotation and have eaten chow Staff Sgt. Matthew Mercado, 3rd squad leader, 1st Platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, of Jonesboro, Ark. takes a well deserved break inside an occupied building during Operation Iron Fury II.



Safety in the tactical environment depends upon compliance with established standards. However, due to the fluid conditions in the tactical environment, safe mission accomplishment relies heavily on the complete integration of risk management

into both the planning and the execution phases. Risk management will assist commanders in anticipating and controlling hazards in the planning phase, and in dealing with unexpected hazards as they arise in the execution phase.

Identifying hazards and implementing effective controls, if properly supervised, will help save soldiers' lives.

A Month in Najaf Remembered

By Pfc. Al Barrus
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- August was a month that the Soldiers of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, won't soon forget.

The company, attached to 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, stationed at Camp Justice, normally conduct day-to-day patrols in the northern Baghdad neighborhood of Kadhamiyah. However, in August, they faced a new task: assist the Marines in neutralizing the Muqtada militia presence in An Najaf.

The Soldiers faced a conventional battle complete with a battlefield and enemy defensive positions. It was an experience the troops will always remember.

"It's hard to describe what it was like there," said Pfc. Jesus Ramirez, a tank driver in 2-12 Cav. "All I can say is that it was a hard month. It was just crazy."

"While we were in Najaf, we saw a very focused combat operation," Capt. Kevin Badger, 2-12 Cav., Company A, commander said. "There were fortified enemy positions and daily attacks."

A major change for many of the troops was going back to their original military specialties. Instead of their usual jobs patrolling,



By Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

Pfc. Jesus Ramirez, a Tank driver in Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, mounts his battle-damaged Abrams tank. The tank, nicknamed "Bad Luck" suffered roughly half a dozen rocket propelled grenade impacts. The multiple hits were taken during a series of battles while the unit was temporarily supporting Marines in Najaf in August.

and participating in cordon and searches, they got to do what they joined the Army to do.

"Everyone ... actually got to do [their] job while we were out there," Pfc. Joseph Pidgeon, a tanker with Company A, said. "If

you're in mortars, you're shooting mortar rounds; if you're a tanker, you're shooting the big rounds: none of that cordon and searching. Rolling around in tanks is what we came in the Army for."

The brunt of the battles the troops ran into were located in the Najaf cemetery: a field of graves and tombs spanning a square mile with catacombs beneath.

"Whenever we rolled into the cemetery, we received enemy contact," Sgt. Dale Frantz, a tank gunner said. "We'd take small-arms fire, then mortars would start to hit along with sniper fire and [rocket propelled grenades]."

This graveyard-turned-battlefield was almost a daily stop for the troops. They spent 12-hour shifts of adrenaline-fueled battle broken up by 20-hours away from the cemetery. This routine was the norm for the group but the rush never died down.

"The adrenaline stays the same every day," Pidgeon said. "The energy stays up, but you gain more focus. I think you get a bit calmer with it."

It was that energy that kept most of them alive during the month of summer heat and enemy fire. The Soldiers learned lessons from each other's experiences.

"The company performed outstanding," Badger said. "They are a very aggressive and lethal team. I don't think any of us wished to go there, but I think that when presented with that task, we just got focused. It enabled us to validate our training. It got to a point where you're not excited, but you're ready to do the job."

Soldiers Defend Camp Justice, Iraqis During Holy Pilgrimage

By Pfc. Al Barrus
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- The beating of drums and the lyrics of Muslim prayers could be heard well within the confines of 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment's patrol base, Camp Justice. The footsteps of tens of thousands of Shiite Muslim pilgrims could be heard as they marched to the Kadhamiyah Holy Shrine just outside the secluded military post on Sept. 11.

This annual event, marking the martyrdom of a Shia holy Imam, Musa Al Kadhim who died 1,000 years ago, would call for extra security as the multitudes of men, women and children marched through the streets to take part in this age-old tradi-

tion.

Though there are many similar pilgrimages to the shrine each year, the Al Kadhim pilgrimage is the largest. During past pilgrimages, violence has erupted.

"There was a lot of preparation involved in the security for this event," said Capt. Seung Ryu, the operations planning officer for 1-5 Cav. "We've had a lot of Soldiers working closely with the Iraqi National Guard (ING), Iraqi Police (IP), and the private shrine guards to prevent and deal with any violent activity that might break out during the march."

The added security measures called upon nearly all of the elements on Camp Justice as well as additional military police units from other installations in Baghdad to cover down on security operations. Soldiers as well as ING and IP forces conducted counter-mortar patrols, traffic control points around the perimeter of the march and beefed up security at Camp Justice's gates,

Shiite Muslims take part in a march to the holy shrine in Kadhamiyah, Sept. 11. One man, held up by others, holds a poster of cleric Muqtada Al Sadr and shouts toward Iraqi forces, but this shouting was the extent of any form of violence during the march.



By Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

Soldiers, Iraqi National Guard and Iraqi Police work together to keep the peace during a Shiite Muslim pilgrimage through Kadhamiyah next to Camp Justice in northern Baghdad.

while remaining elements stood by as a quick-reaction force.

The need for the extra troops came at the request of the local Iraqi government, but it was also inspired by the events of previous Shia pilgrimages.

"I anticipate just large amounts of people shouting and maybe throwing stones," said 1st Lt. John Erickson, 630th Military Police Company. "We are prepared to react to just about anything."

But luckily, the crowd of

Iraqis brought little more to the situation than the loud singing and other customs that come with the tradition. Some of the pilgrims displayed pictures of radical Shiite cleric and militia leader Muqtada Al Sadr, but showed no acts of violence.

"It was relatively quiet here inside the walls on the base," Ryu said. "You wouldn't be able to tell anything unusual was going on. The biggest difference is we have an increased uniform requirement just as a precaution-

ary measure."

The Multi-National troops came prepared and expected the worse at the largest Shia pilgrimage to Kadhamiyah of the year, but were pleasantly surprised that there was no violence during the march.

"The Iraqi people got what they wanted from us; we helped keep the peace," Ryu said. "We minimized our presence in the event to put the Iraqi face on this, and for the most part, I think we succeeded."



3rd BCT Trains Baghdad's Iraqi Police

By Spc. Jan Critchfield
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- As a part of ongoing Multi-National Force efforts to improve security in Baghdad, the 1st Cavalry Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team provided four days of professionalism and tactics instruction to local Iraqi Police leaders that ended Sept. 1.

As a part of a Leader's Operational Assistance and Development (LOAD) course, the policemen were trained on techniques of building clearing, arrest and search, public image, professionalism, and the operational planning process.

"I feel very good about the Iraqi Police force based on the leaders I've seen here today," said Lt. Col. Thomas MacDonald, commander of 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment. "These leaders will be able to influence hundreds of Iraqi Policemen."

MacDonald also spoke of the importance of interaction between Multi-

National and Iraqi Security forces.

"By conducting training together we develop a relationship together," he said. "The security of Iraq during the future elections relies greatly on the cooperation of Iraqi security forces and the coalition," he said.

The LOAD class was conducted by members of the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion, a Florida-based Army Reserve unit attached to the battalion and operating in central Baghdad.

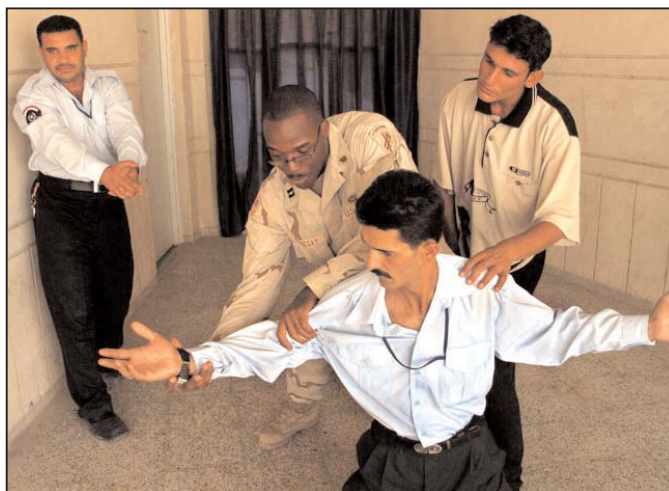
Additional units provided cadre for the training, including Company C, 1st Battalion, 153rd Infantry Regiment, an Arkansas Army National Guard unit.

"The purpose of the LOAD class ... was twofold," said, Capt. Reggie Kornegay, 478th CA officer in charge of the training. "One is to help with the professional development of the [Iraqi Police] service. That needs to start with their leadership. The second purpose was to build the relationship of the Iraqi Police and Multi-National Forces."

The technique of community policing was one of the subjects covered in the course in an effort to improve the rapport between the Iraqi Police and the people who they serve.

With the threat of being killed part of these policemen's everyday life, their relationship with the community not only determines whether or not they can do their job effectively, but also whether or not they will live at all.

"One of the lessons learned in the class was to get them to understand that the way that they treat the public has a direct effect on their survivability on the streets," Kornegay said. "It's very danger-



(Above) Capt. Reggie Kornegay of the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion shows the proper way to handle a suspect while searching for concealed objects. (Right) Kornegay demonstrates a take-down move that he learned as an officer in New York City to Iraqi Police during a four-day class that was aimed at developing the officers' public image.



Photos by Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD
Iraqi Policemen conduct close-quarters fire drills while being coached by a member of the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Florida.



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

Cpl. Andrea Russell (right) of Treatment Platoon, E Forward Support Medical Company, 215th Forward Service Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, helps 3rd BCT Dental Surgeon Capt. Joseph Choi with a dental procedure being done on a 3rd Brigade Soldier.

Hygienist Helps Cav Smile

By Spc. Jan Critchfield
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- Since deploying to Iraq, Cpl. Andrea Russell of Treatment Platoon, E Forward Support Medical Company, 215th Forward Service Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, has proven to be essential to the success of E FSMC's Treatment Platoon. For her efforts, Russell was named 215th FSB Hero of the Week.

Working as a Dental Hygienist, the Moreno, California native is everything an NCO should be—diligent, task focused, motivated, and a good leader. She has performed over 20 teeth cleanings and assisted in 350 procedures since her deployment.

Going out into various Baghdad communities, Russell has also seen over 500 Iraqi citizens during two E FSMC Medical Civic Assistance Programs.

"Corporal Russell is an outstanding Soldier," 2nd Lt. Martha Hart, Treatment Platoon leader said. "You give her a task, and it's done, automatically."

When the Treatment Platoon's steril-

izer, an essential piece of equipment used to disinfect dental instruments, ceased functioning, Russell was relentless in her efforts to get the essential piece of equipment up and running.

"She knows her equipment," Hart said. "She knows what she's doing."

"It's been a pleasure working with her," Capt. Joseph Choi, 3rd Brigade Dental Surgeon said, "She's very studious, very hard working. There's a lot beyond the dental realm that she's had to do and has been doing a very good job."

"She's not only a dental assistant, she's also a dental hygienist," he said, "She's very good at keeping her skills up-to-date."

"She's able to anticipate what instrument I'll need and is able to give post-operative instructions to patients ... It's nice to have an assistant who can anticipate what the doctor is about to do. It makes my part much easier as a doctor."

"I've enjoyed my time in Iraq [and] being able to help people out," Russell said. "I definitely want to do dental work when I get out of the Army."

Defense Counsel Helps Clients Facing UCMJ Action

By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde
122nd MPAD

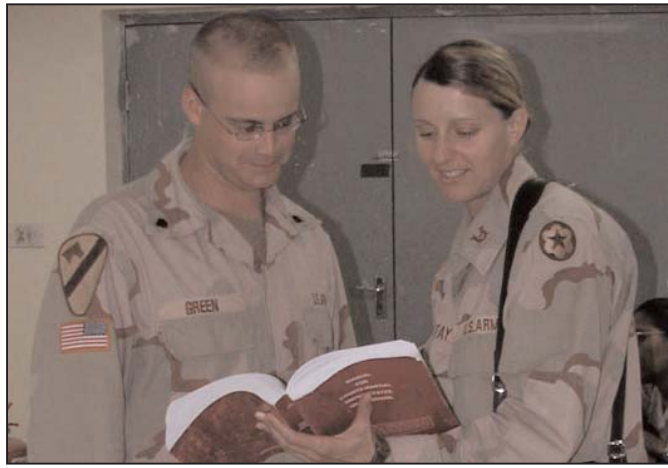
TAJI, Iraq-- Watching a defendant being questioned in a military courtroom on the television show JAG can be very entertaining. But, in real life, it is a different story. When a Soldier at Camp Taji is facing punitive action, they can take heart in knowing that Capt. Marci Pettay, Trial Defense Counsel, is there to help.

"I'm active duty, but I don't belong to any unit in the Army," Pettay said. "Part of the reason for that is if we belonged to say the 1st [Cavalry Division Judge Advocate General] office then we would be limited in the clients we could see. Thus, keeping us separate from any units allows me to do my job. Most importantly, remaining separate from the Soldiers' units lets my clients know that we share an attorney-client relationship and that I represent them, not the command."

Pettay's area of operations covers Afghanistan, Kuwait and Iraq. Like her legal counterparts, Pettay was deployed as a single element. Stationed on Fort Hood, Texas and ready to travel throughout her region, she will be based out of Camp Taji for approximately two more months, at which time she will be replaced by another TDS.

"Most of my trials are in Baghdad," Pettay said. "I have several clients on other [Forward Operating Bases] as well, [and I] travel to my clients and to the crime scenes."

The office at Camp Taji is where Pettay and her paralegal, Spc. Landon Green, advise clients of their rights and perform the research necessary for up-coming cases. Pettay handles a broad spectrum of cases from insubordination and larceny to Rules of Engagement violations and rape.



By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

Capt. Marci Pettay, Trial Defense Counsel, relies heavily on her paralegal, Spc. Landon Green. The star patch that Pettay wears represents the independent status of her office as TDS.

"We have priority one and priority two cases," Pettay said. "Priority one are courts martial and range from special to general. That is where a Soldier is actually facing a federal conviction with a trial before a judge. Priority two are suspect rights, Article 15 and Chapter clients. If a Soldier is afraid that they could be court martialed or that they might have done something wrong and they want to talk to an attorney, they can come in and ask me 'what do I do?' If [the Criminal Investigation Division] or a Soldier's command wants to question them and they have been read their rights, they can invoke their Article 31 rights and come see me about their right to remain silent. We can discuss whether or not it is appropriate for them to

make a statement."

A barred attorney in Maryland, who calls Cape Cod, Mass. home, Pettay has been in the JAG corps for nearly six years. "To be a JAG officer, you have to be a barred attorney. I was offered my commission while in law school. After I graduated law school and passed the bar, I was allowed to report for [the Officer Basic Course]. If you don't pass the bar, you are not invited to accept your commission."

As in most cases, Pettay was a prosecutor before she was a defense counsel.

"It is preferable to have someone in defense litigation that has experience as a prosecutor," she said. "If you make mistakes as a prosecutor, it is the government that

loses. But, if you make mistakes as a defense counsel that could mean someone's life."

Pettay explained the differences between being a prosecutor and a defense counsel are many.

"As a prosecutor you ... work very closely with CID and the [Military Police]. As a prosecutor, the legal burden in a case is on you. You are also responsible for everything from presenting your case to ensuring the witnesses show up," Pettay said. "As a defense counsel, it is pure legal work. The burden is on the government and you poke holes in what they try and throw at you. They are very different crafts. On the other hand, as a defense counsel, there is more weight on your shoulders because you have someone's life in your hands. I find both fields very interesting, but I am glad I was a prosecutor first, because now I know the system."

Of the things that Pettay would want the Soldiers facing punitive action to know, foremost is the fact that she and the members of her office are there for them.

"We are available to them," Pettay said. "This is a service the Army provides. When they come in my office they can expect a straight shooter. I will defend them vehemently, but I will also tell them how it is and where they stand. Part of what I do is force the government to live up to their standards. They wrote the rules. If they don't play by them, I am going to catch them at it. I defend individuals, but part of my job is to keep the system honest. Sometimes we are the lone rangers out there that not everyone loves because we are 'fighting the command', but in reality when you have an organization like us it forces everyone to stick to the rules. At the end of the day, that protects everyone."

From Germany to Iraq: Best Friends Together Again

By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde
122nd MPAD

TAJI, Iraq-- Imagine reuniting with a best friend you haven't spoken to in ten years. Now imagine that reunion over the breakfast table in Iraq.

"I was at breakfast one morning, I saw this guy across the room and thought 'I think I know him,'" said Master Sgt. David Avington,

Headquarters and Headquarters Company Motor Sergeant, 39th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. "I went over to talk to him and sure enough it was George."

They met in 1981 when they were stationed together with the 58th Engineer Company in Fulda, Germany.

"We were roommates and the only two black Soldiers in the company for about a year or so," said

Master Sgt. Davidson George, Maintenance Officer, 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div. "We played sports and went volkswalking. We did a lot of things together."

While George has been active Army for the past 25 years, Avington is in his 21st year with the Arkansas National Guard, which he joined after completing his four year tour. Even though their career paths took them in two different directions, they still share the same job and rank.

"Over the years, we have phoned each other or wrote," said George, a native of Dominica, Caribbean Islands, who currently calls Uniondale, N.Y. home. "While I lived in Wisconsin, I had the opportunity to drive through Arkansas and tried to visit with [Avington] then. Through job constraints and timing we weren't able to visit, but have kept in touch in small spurts over the years. Even though we have not had many opportunities to get together over the years, we have still managed to stay good friends."

The scene of just missing each other has played itself out several times over their 20-year friendship. One particular instance was during mobilization and training for their deployment to Iraq.

"[Avington] was at Ft. Hood for four months and I didn't even know it," said George.

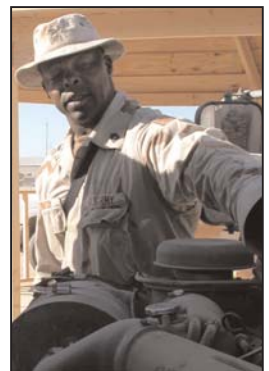
Working in the same field in different brigades, the two motor sergeants continually help each other out with work related issues.

"Since we are in the maintenance arena, we share stuff," said George. "Directions, part numbers, what have you. We try to make our jobs easier by helping each other out."

As if sharing jobs, rank and a long-standing friendship were not enough, George, a drag racer on the side, is turning Avington onto the sport.

"[George] is introducing me to drag racing," said Avington, a native of Arkadelphia, Ark., who calls Malvern home. "Who can tell, I might get into it."

Though their separate career



Master Sgt. David Avington paths have taken them individually to different parts of the world, the two old friends are here in Iraq spending as much time as they can together.

Avington summed up the situation for both of them when he said, "It is always good to see a friendly face. We were roommates for 18 months. When you have a friendship like ours, it just doesn't go away."



Photos by Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

Master Sgt. Davidson George

Red Team

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New Clinic is Opened in Al Rashid

By Cpl. Bill Putnam
122nd MPAD

AL RASHID, Baghdad-- A former Republican Guard headquarters is now Al Rashid's newest clinic.

"This clinic is a gift from the American people to Iraqis," said Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, 1st Cavalry Division commander, during his remarks just before the ribbon signifying the clinic's official opening.

Approximately 200 sheiks, doctors, local politicians and Soldiers from the First Team were on hand to see the Deputy Minister of Health cut the ribbon. A walking tour of the facility was also given.

The project took almost seven months to complete and cost \$2.7 million, said Capt. Russell Reiter, a civil affairs team chief with Company A, 489th CA Battalion.

"The project was just getting started when I got here in February," he said. "It basically consumed my entire rotation."

The Iraqi Minister of Health toured the large, two-floored and multi-winged facility recently and

said it was by far the best clinic in Iraq, Reiter said.

The facilities are extensive, said Reiter. It will have an obstetrics and gynecology department for women, laboratories, a couple of operating rooms, an outpatient clinic, two pharmacies, a couple of X-ray rooms and dentists.

It will also have a 24-bed inpatient capability, said Capt. Joe Phillips, the brigade surgeon for the 5th Brigade Combat Team. An Intensive Care Unit is also planned, Phillips said.

"It will probably have 10 beds, he said.

A non-governmental organization led by Lady Emma Nickelson, an English baroness, will also have an office in the hospital for patient statistics and health classes, Reiter said.

"This is a very good thing," Reiter said.

All of the equipment came from Western Europe or the U.S., explained Reiter.

"Everything they got is state-of-the-art stuff," he said.

Some of it is so advanced some of the Iraqi doctors asked



By Cpl. Bill Putnam, 122nd MPAD

The Iraqi Deputy Minister of Health cuts the ribbon signifying the Al Furat Clinic's opening.

Reiter and his civil affairs team if they were teaching them how to operate it.

The biggest hurdle to opening this clinic was coordination, said Jeffry Brinkley, the medicine attaché to the U.S. Embassy to Iraq.

Getting everyone involved -- the 1st Cav. Div., the Ministry of Health and the Baroness -- on the

same sheet of music took a lot of coordination, Brinkley said.

"It's very difficult to get anything done here, so this is a great success," Brinkley said. "It's a great day."

The project finally came together during the recent Iraqi national conference, he said. All the parties involved met and hammered out the big details of who

would do what, Brinkley said.

Chiarelli said the clinic's opening was a sign of Iraq's continued progress toward stability. He singled out the local construction workers and security personnel who built and watched over the site.

"Their dedication to the project is an indicator toward a new Iraq," Chiarelli said.

1-7 Cav and Jihad NC Hand Out 38 New Wheelchairs

By Cpl. Bill Putnam
122nd MPAD

AL RASHID, Baghdad-- The Jihad Neighborhood Council (NC) and 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, gave something 38 citizens of the Al Rashid neighborhood never had until Aug. 27-- mobility.

Children and adults hurt during last year's invasion and those suffering from birth defects would receive the chairs, said Capt. Jason Colbert, a spokesman for 1-7 Cav.

"The wheel chairs will

make it easier on the families not to be a burden," Colbert said.

Five residents received the chairs at the ceremony at the Al Rashid District Council building. The remaining chairs will be passed out by the Jihad NC, Colbert said.

The entire project took approximately two months to complete, said Capt. Aaron Hetherington, the civil-military operations chief for 1-7 Cav.

The NC broached the idea with the squadron but it took time to find the contractor. Eventually one was found in

Jordan, Hetherington said.

The chairs cost approximately \$150 a piece, Colbert said.

Handing out the wheel chairs will "increase the quality of life with one-small step," Colbert said.

Quality of life was apparently a big issue for the handicapped citizens of Jihad. Many of them had to be carried everywhere they went, Colbert explained.

The recent giveaway wasn't the squadron's first. They teamed up with the Rizalla NC in July. A proposal to give 75 wheelchairs to residents of the Shurta neighborhood is in the works as well.

It's a small thing but a big issue that's been addressed, Colbert said.

"The people were very appreciative," he said. "This just shows we can work together to help the people."

A local handicapped Al Rashid man listens to a speech during the Aug. 27 ceremony where wheelchairs were handed out to citizens of the Jihad neighborhood.



By Cpl. Bill Putnam, 122nd MPAD

A Day in the Life of a Soldier



By Cpl. Bill Putnam, 122nd MPAD

Pfc. Russell Northrup watches Spc. Eric Harris pour steering fluid in their Humvee's power-steering pump before heading out on a patrol. Both Harris and Northrup are tank crewmen in Company C, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment.

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58th Engineers Bridge Brigade Gap

By Pfc. Matthew McLaughlin
10th Mnt. Div. Public Affairs

CAMP LIBERTY, Baghdad-- Soldiers from the 58th Combat Engineer Company from Fort Irwin, Calif., are supporting numerous battalions in the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (Commandos), 10th Mountain Division. The engineers provide vital assets to the Commandos, said Col. Mark Milley, 2 BCT commander.

"The 58th Engineers provide us tactical mobility as well as being fully trained in infantry tasks," he said.

Platoons from the 58th Engineers are divided amongst infantry battalions in the BCT to provide them engineer support, said 1st Sgt. Elmo Leichenauer 58th ENG first sergeant.

"We are a regimental asset," he said. "We re-organized to provide engineer capabilities to the battalions."

First platoon is working with 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment, ensuring bridges and roads are capable of carrying the mechanized infantry's tanks and equipment.

"One bridge may be able to carry a donkey cart and the other may carry an M-1 Abrams Tank," said 2nd Lt. Patrick Armstrong, 58th ENG operations officer. "We'll make sure a bridge or road meets the military load class and can carry a tank across it."

Soldiers from 2nd Platoon are working



A Soldier from the 58th Combat Engineer Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, keeps watch over a destroyed bridge Aug. 13.

with 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, providing similar engineer support and ensuring the security of Iraqi bridges. During the Iraqi National Conference, 2nd Platoon Soldiers secured important bridges, ensuring the event was not overshadowed by insurgent attacks, Leichenauer said.

The Assault and Obstacle Platoon are currently providing security at Camp Victory North. They are also conducting maintenance on the engineers' vehicles and other combat tasks, said Sgt. Keshone Peyton, 58th ENG.

"Soldiers are doing lots of gate guard, stuffing bridges, patrols, lots of cool stuff," Peyton said. "They are things we all want to do."

All platoons are ready to provide infantry units with their expertise, Armstrong said.



Photos by Pfc. Matthew McLaughlin, 10th Mtn. Div. Public Affairs

Soldiers from 58th Combat Engineer Company patrol the streets of Iraq Aug. 13 in their first solo patrol as a part of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

"We do a lot of route reconnaissance, route clearing, making sure the roads are clear of [improvised explosive devices]," he said. "Our M-113 Armored Personnel Carriers also provide armored capabilities to infantry units."

Peyton said the engineers are eager to conduct operations in support of 2nd BCT. "Everyone wants to go out and patrol," he said. "We just have to pay attention and stay safe at all times."

The combat operations are a welcome change of pace from months of training and

preparation for operations, Leichenauer said.

"They're glad to be working again," he said. "We were doing classes in camp for a long time. Now that they're out there doing patrols, they're pretty excited."

Spc. Harold Hoffman, 58th ENG, said his unit is well-suited for combat operations with infantry units. They provide engineer capabilities as well as an infantry mentality.

"Everyone's first [job] is infantry," he said. "We're engineers secondly, Soldiers first."

Soldiers Get Lessons as New Commandos

By Pfc. Brian Schroeder
10th Mnt. Div. Public Affairs

CAMP LIBERTY, Baghdad-- Soldiers spend countless hours packing, planning and preparing before deploying to a combat zone. Once they arrive, the learning continues. More information is given to the Soldiers to keep them informed of their unit's current situation.

For new Soldiers attached to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team Commandos, this information is given to them as soon as they arrive in Baghdad through the School of the

Commando.

"The School of the Commando is an orientation program for individual replacement Soldiers coming into the Commando Brigade," said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Kinzie, 2nd BCT command sergeant major.

The three to four day school instructs new Soldiers how to properly perform personal maintenance checks and services on equipment such as humvees, night vision goggles, radio systems and weapon systems.

"We make sure they receive proper instruction on how to handle the systems here," Kinzie said. "For Soldiers coming from stateside, this is a little different environment."

Combat lifesaver certification is one of the areas covered in the class. Kinzie said a large population of qualified combat life savers will be a huge benefit to each unit.

"It doesn't matter where you are in country," he said. "There is always a threat."

Pvt. Chris Bailey, an infantryman from Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment, arrived in Iraq less than a week ago and is

attending the School of the Commando combat life saver course. He said the training he and his fellow Soldiers are receiving is invaluable.

"The combat life saver material we are learning is needed to help save somebody's life in the field," he said. "This is also a good refresher for those who already know this stuff."

One class shows where they will be operating and the demographics of that area. This class also informs Soldiers of the other units who will be fighting along with the Commando brigade.

"The school familiarizes Soldiers to their area of operations and brings them up to date on the current threat within the area," Kinzie said. "We give them a general overview of the religious groups and demographics in the area, such as what section is Suni, Shi'ite and former Ba'ath Party members. We not only deal with people from the city, but with a lot of farmers as well."

The goal of the classes is to jumpstart the new Soldiers to the same level as the Soldiers currently in country, Kinzie said.



By Pfc. Brian Schroeder, 10th Mtn. Div. Public Affairs

Pvt. DaJuan Spears, 1st Brigade 41st Infantry Regiment, ties off a bandage he wrapped around Pfc. Jonathan Player, 1-41 INF during the triage portion of a combat life saver course. The Combat Lifesavers Course is part of many classes new Soldiers to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team "Commandos" will attend during the School of the Commando.

"The information and training they receive will be beneficial to the new Soldiers because it will put them on the same sheet of music as the currently deployed unit," he said.

Pfc. Jonathan Player, Headquarters Company, 1-41 INF said the classes are not only good for new Soldiers, but for those who may need to

brush up on their skills.

"The school is a good refresher," he said. "There are a lot of new Soldiers coming in that don't know a lot of the material we are learning. These classes are making sure they are prepared for any situation while out in the field. Besides, you can never get enough training."



Steel Dragons Reach Half-Million Mile Mark

By Sgt. John Queen
3rd BCT Public Affairs

BAGHDAD-- Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division reached a milestone in August by logging half a million miles traveled during convoy operations around central Iraq since arriving in Baghdad last April.

"The task force just completed its half millionth operational mile," said Lt. Col. Greg Shultz the battalion's commander. "That's 500,000 operational miles and about 2,600 missions that we have already completed."

More commonly known as Task Force Steel Dragon, the battalion provides security escorts for nearly every convoy that originates inside Baghdad's International Zone.

These convoys go to various ministries and locations throughout the capital city including daily runs to Baghdad International Airport. The task force also conducts a number of long-range missions to different points in central Iraq.

Shultz said that a major part of what his Soldiers do while on these escort missions is provide security for specific passengers.

"We have platoons that do missions for the Ministry of Oil," he said. "They (the ministry) send advisers down to investigate where pipelines have been blown. So we provide security on the site as well as in route."

Shultz's task force is made up of active duty Soldiers from Fort Hood, Texas and a company from the California Army National Guards 1st Battalion, 160th Infantry Regiment located in Riverside, Calif.

"They're full members of the team," Shultz said about his guardsmen. "You cannot tell the difference between C company and the rest of my other batteries. They've done a



By Sgt. John Queen, 3rd BCT Public Affairs

Before departing for the day's mission, 1st Lt. Jamie Vasquez, a platoon leader from Company C 160th Infantry Regiment, California Army National Guard gives a patrol brief to his platoon and their principles. Keeping them informed of what the convoy's route, destination, mission and enemy activity might be is key to the survival of his Soldiers and passengers.

great job."

Shultz explained that these half million miles have involved enemy contact.

"It's not unusual for us to have at least one platoon a day to have enemy contact," Shultz said. "We've had some days when two or three platoons have enemy contact."

"One platoon on one mission at two different times dealt with improvised explosive devices and on a third incident had small-arms fire," he said.

Before each convoy the Steel Dragon troopers go through a series of briefings and checks to make sure nothing has been over-

looked.

"We do pre-combat inspection's prior to leaving," said Staff Sgt. Paul Teso, a convoy noncommissioned officer in charge from Company C 1-160 Infantry. "We do function checks on the weapons. We make sure we have ammo and a re-supply of food, water - plenty of water."

"We explain the rules of engagement to the [special passengers]," Teso, a resident of Fresno, Calif. said. "We let them know their security is our priority."

"Our main mission is to get the [passengers] to where they need to go as fast as we

can," Spc. Bradon Doyel, a gunner with Company C said.

For having driven a half million miles and more than two thousand missions the Steel Dragons received few injuries.

"We have had more wounded than what I'd like," Shultz said.

With the task force less than half way through its deployment Shultz is confident his Soldiers will surpass the next milestone - one million miles.

"We have a number of months to go so we're expecting we'll break the one-millionth mile mark before we go home," Shultz said.

Iraqi Firefighters get Some Much-Needed Training

By Sgt. 1st Class
Clarence Kugler
478th Civil Affairs Bn.

BAGHDAD-- There are 25 fire stations in Baghdad scattered on both sides of the Tigris River.

The firefighters working in these stations are some of the most heavily worked firefighters in the world, according to Maj. Alan Leitschuh of the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion, a Miami, Fla. reserve unit supporting the 1st Cavalry Division for Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

The need for firefighters has been so great in Baghdad that many of the new hires have had no formal firefighter training. They have been thrown into action with on the job training mixed with responding to actual emergencies.

Leitschuh, a firefighter with the Fort Myers, Fla., Fire Department; along with Maj.



By Sgt. 1st Class Clarence Kugler, 478th Civil Affairs Bn.

Mark Shankle, of the 1st Cav. Div. Government Support Team; and Capt. Richard Daniels, a hazardous material expert from Palm Beach County, Fla., decided to put a firefighter training program together that would be aimed at the current Baghdad firefighters who lacked formal firefighter

training.

The program began in April and has included training in basic firefighting skills such as fire behavior, fire control, ropes and knots, self-contained breathing apparatus use, drivers safety and first aid.

"It is important that the new

Maj. Alan Leitschuh, 478th Civil Affairs Battalion, demonstrates proper knots and lifting procedures to Baghdad Fire Fighters during a training class.

hires learn a standard way of doing procedures so that everyone can work together," Leitschuh said. "We are stressing fighting fires with the same techniques throughout the city of Baghdad."

"I expect to train about 500 Baghdad firefighters. Since the training is in the infant stages, there must be ongoing training in the fire stations, in the classroom and with hands on instruction to solidify and reinforce training," he added.

Camp Mancini, the home of the 478th in the International Zone, has been the training center for the Baghdad firefighters. Last week fire trucks were brought to the camp and the firefighters worked on safe fire hose operating procedures and standard oper-

ating procedures for lifting equipment to rooftops.

"There is a brotherhood among firefighters that runs through our training," Leitschuh said. "We are all committed to saving lives and doing it in a manner that is as safe as possible."

The training Leitschuh has scheduled is taught directly out of the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) Training manuals. Although the manuals are in English, there are interpreters that translate the instruction into Arabic for the Iraqi firefighters. KBR has loaned manuals, videos and other materials to the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion for the training.

"There is a brotherhood of firefighters around the world. A firefighter would do anything to help another firefighter anywhere in the world," said KBR Assistant Chief of Operations and Training Officer Tom Klug.

Italy Gen. Visits Cooke for Independence Celebration

By Sgt. Merriion LaSonde
122nd MPAD

TAJI, Iraq-- The Republic of Macedonia celebrated its 13th year of Independence on Sept. 8. To commemorate the occasion, Italian Maj. Gen Armando Novelli, deputy commanding general, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, visited the Macedonian Soldiers stationed at Camp Cooke in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I was invited by Capt. [Dragan] Stevoski, the Macedonian Senior National Representative, to the Anniversary of the Macedonian Independence Day, which occurred on 8 September 1991," said Novelli. "As the MNC-I [DCG] for the Coalition, it is my duty to visit and meet the MNC-I different contingents. And I would say it is also a great honor and pleasure to have the opportunity to meet so many Soldiers, [Non-Commissioned Officers] and officers from 30 different countries. And of course, I was very happy to meet the Macedonian contingent on this important day for them and their nation."

Primarily supporting the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment and the 1st Battalion 206th Infantry Regiment, the Macedonian troops are in Iraq serving beside their American allies to prove a point.

"Our mission is to conduct ... reconnaissance and raids according to the needs of the battalion commander," said Capt. Goran Ilioski, commander of the task force. "We are here to help in the fight against terrorism and our government wants to show that we have the capability to work side by side with the coalition forces and to prove that we are ready to become mem-



Photos by Sgt. Merriion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

(Above) Italian Maj. Gen. Armando Novelli (Far Left), deputy commanding general, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, and (center-with weapon) Italian Brig. Gen. Carmine De Pascale, chief of coalition operations, Multi-National Forces-Iraq, view a weapons static display during their visit with the Macedonian troops stationed at Camp Cooke in support of OIF II. (Right) Italian Maj. Gen. Armando Novelli, deputy commanding general, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, addresses the Macedonian troops stationed at Camp Cooke and expresses his pride and satisfaction of a job well done. Novelli was visiting the Macedonian Soldiers to commemorate their country's 13th anniversary as an independent republic.

bers of the [North Atlantic Treaty Organization]."

According to the Republic of Macedonia Ministry of Defense Website, "[Macedonia] has demonstrated its firm determination in the last few years to become a NATO member country. This organization, which is the cornerstone of the Trans-Atlantic security system... would contribute to the peace, stability and prosperity in the world."

A country in its growing independent infancy, NATO membership would afford Macedonia the protection of many strong allies to help fight against its enemies, both foreign and domestic.

Embedded with the Macedonians is a small group of Iraqi National Guardsmen who

accompany them on all their missions.

"We use them to bridge the cultural gap between us and the local nation," Ilioski said. "We believe having them with us helps the locals be less resistant to us and our presence."

During his visit, Novelli received a mission and training brief of the Macedonian's operations, viewed a weapons static display and toured the ING facilities at Camp Cooke.

"I have got a very good impression," Novelli said. "They are tough Soldiers and very well trained. The results of their operations here in Iraq are outstanding. I was briefed by the platoon commander, Capt. Ilioski. He demon-



strated a strong leadership and his pride in serving in Iraq with his Soldiers for the establishment of a more peaceful country. I spoke to their battalion commander, Lt. Col. Klemmer, and he told me he is very proud of them. They are performing in a wonderful way."

After lunch with the Macedonian troops and Brig. Gen. Ronald Chastain, commander, 39th Brigade Combat Team, Novelli received a plaque from Ilioski on behalf of his troops in appreciation for the visit.

Addressing the assembled troops, Novelli expressed his pride

and appreciation for a job well done.

"I am very happy to meet you in the day which represents for the Macedonian people the achievement of the independence," Novelli said. "I am impressed by the operational successes you have reached in your [area of operations]. Your work here in Iraq is very important. I send you the personal greeting of the MNC-I Commander, Lt. Gen. Thomas Metz. Finally, I want to say Macedonia is very close to Italy, my country, and it is likely that we will meet again in the future. After today's visit, I hope it will happen very soon."



Photos by Cpl. Bill Putnam, 122nd MPAD

(Above) Singers from the 1st Cavalry Division's latino band "Grupo K-Lor Salsa Band" sing a little melody during a Sept. 21 concert at Camp Falcon. The band performed for an audience of about 100 Soldiers, all from the division's 5th Brigade Combat Team on the camp's basketball courts.

(Left) Soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division's 5th Brigade Combat Team dance to a salsa song played by the division's latino band "Grupo K-Lor Salsa Band" during a 90-minute set.



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

91st Eng. Seek IP Recruits

By Sgt. Dan Purcell
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- Push-ups, sit-ups, and a run are all the makings of a military physical training test, but for some Iraqis trying to become policemen they are a rite of passage.

Soldiers of the 91st Engineer Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division and the 425th Civil Affairs Battalion sponsored an Iraqi Police (IP) recruitment drive on Sunday, Sept. 12.

According to Staff Sgt. Orlando Torres, Headquarters Company, 91st ENG, Spc. Jared Davidson, 425th Civil Affairs Battalion, holds the feet of an Iraqi Police applicant during a recruitment drive sponsored by the 91st Engineer Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. The sit-ups were part of a physical training test given to help screen potential applicants.

Neighborhood Council (NC) members from five neighborhoods were asked to provide 30 recruits from their areas, who were interested in joining the police force.

"The 91st is actually sponsoring this IP recruitment through the [Neighborhood Councils] in our area of operation," Torres said. "We are providing ... the site security and screening process."

The screening process included a physical training test, a medical check-up, and a background check before the potential recruits were allowed to apply. Of the 150 expected candidates, only 30 would be hired immediately and the remainder would be placed in a pool of future recruits.

"Last time we had a 50 percent washout rate because a lot of the Iraqis couldn't pass the written test, or had failed at some step of the process," Sgt. Timothy Roby, 425th CA, said. "However, we are hoping to get at least 100 good candidates this time because they are being recommended by their [council]

members."

The prospective recruits are required to run a 13.5 to 17 second 100 meter dash, do 10 sit-ups, 10 push-ups and five pull-ups. They are then given a medical check-up that includes a urinalysis to insure that they are drug free and healthy. Lastly, their backgrounds are checked out and they can then fill out an application.

"Ultimately, we want all of them to pass, but if an applicant fails any part of the screening process, then they will not be considered for this hiring phase," Capt. Marc Chung, 425th CA, said. "If we didn't set some basic standards, then everybody would want to be an IP."

"The best part of this is putting these men to work. The Iraqis have the same needs as anyone else... They just want to provide for their families," Torres said. "And the bottom-line is that we want to get as many out on the streets as we can because it allows them to become part of the process."

Platoon Offers MP Support for 2nd BCT

By Pfc. Brian Schroeder
10th Mtn. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD-- When the 2nd Brigade Combat Team Commandos rolled into Baghdad with their pooled resources of 14 units from eight different military posts, one of those resources had to provide security for the task force of more than 3,000 Soldiers. The choice was one of the smallest attachments of the brigade, a platoon of approximately 30 Soldiers.

The 1st Platoon, 463rd Military Police Company, Law Enforcement Command, has been attached to the 2nd BCT to provide a wide spectrum of security tasks for the Commandos.

"We are trained for everything," said Pfc. Andy Piazza, 1st Platoon driver. "All of the training we had before we left was so diverse; convoy security, main supply route patrol. We did a lot of refresher training on how to deal with enemy prisoner of war and how to deal with the locals. Everybody jokes that MP stands for multi-purpose, not military police."

One of the main tasks given to the 1st Platoon is to assist the local Iraqi

police with establishing their own methods of law enforcement.

"We will work together and do some training with the Iraqi police," said Sgt. 1st Class Marcus Ferguson, 1st Platoon, platoon sergeant. "We will work with them on methods of doing traffic control points, setting up checkpoints and riding along with them during patrols. We will be giving them a different perspective on law enforcement as far as doing it in a military fashion."

Piazza said he is anxious to get out and have some interaction with the local Iraqis. He said handing out candy and water to Iraqi children was the first taste of how appreciative the Iraqi people are of U.S. Soldiers.

"Ninety percent of the people I've seen are happy we are here," he said. "On the convoy up here there was a street lined with at least 20 kids around our truck and we'd hand out water to them. That is something the American people don't realize. All they see us doing is blowing things up. They don't realize how happy the kids and families are to see the troops."



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

Nearly 150 Soldiers lined the halls of the 31st Combat Army Surgical Hospital during a September 20 blood drive. They responded to a call for an emergency blood donation after hearing about a soldier who was seriously injured in battle.

BLOOD, from Page 1

The need for blood went far beyond what the workers at the CASH could provide, however, and beyond even what the injured Soldier's comrades could supply, who immediately volunteered to donate after arriving at the CASH with their injured friend.

"The Soldier's unit began bringing in droves of people," Parson said. "Then we called 3rd Brigade. They sent the word out to units around the International Zone."

By one o'clock in the morning, nearly 150 Soldiers of the needed blood type,

most pulling an all-nighter after finishing a day's work, lined the hall outside the donation room.

"It moves me to see these Soldiers come out to help someone they don't even know, and that [when] they feel that another Soldier is in trouble, they come willing, no questions asked," Parson said.

"We haven't quite needed this much blood before in the past, maybe five units or two units [of blood] at the most," she said. "But this Soldier was a special case, and it was amazing to see how many people came out at one o'clock in the morning."

2-5 Cav. Breaks Bread with Kurds

By Capt. Michael Martinez
2-5 Cav. Public Affairs

CAMP HOPE, BAGHDAD-- It is not every day when Soldiers can sit down to a home-cooked meal in Iraq, while at the same time forging stronger ties with Kurdish allies in Sadr City over some Kurdish cuisine.

The Liberal Faylee Kurds Organization organized a feast and invited Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, for food and fellowship. The event was coordinated through 345th Psychological Operations (PSYOP), which is attached to 2-5 Cav. 345th PSYOP regularly conducts campaigns in the area promoting Multi-National Forces civil works projects.

"We have been coming to the Liberal Faylee Kurds Organization for the past three months working as a conduit between us and the Kurdish community in Sadr City," Sgt. Steven Nabors, 345th PSYOP said. "They want to have lunches like this one as a thank you for our assistance and a way for their leadership and Task Force 2-5 Cav. leadership to come together and discuss issues."

The lunch included a huge display of food across a table with a large assortment of Kurdish dishes from which to choose. Dishes like Kuba, a deep fried wheat pocket packed with lamb, raisins, almonds and seasonings, were served. Or a kabob, which unlike the traditional western style that contains meat and vegetables, in the Middle East it is a patty, ground lamb meat with seasoning placed on a skewer and grilled.

"The lunch like this brings our two cultures together," Staff Sgt. Dave Gurba, scout platoon, 2-5 Cav. said. "It seemed like everybody was happy. We didn't have to worry about the fighting at that moment and it almost seems like you are eating with your friends back home."

Lt. Col. Gary Volesky, 2-5 Cav. commander, listened and discussed issues pertaining to the Kurdish organization, while enjoying the Kurdish hospitality.

"They conveyed to me their history under Saddam Hussein and how they could go about making claims of repatriation for loss property under Saddam's regime," Volesky said. "I told them that I encourage them to go through their government and present the Kurdish issues and that I would use the Multi-National



By Capt. Michael Martinez, 2-5 Cav. Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Dave Gurba helps himself to a few of the dishes prepared by the Liberal Faylee Kurds Organization. Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, attended a dinner prepared by the Liberal Faylee Kurds Organization.

Forces channel to assist them."

The mood at the end of the lunch was both homey and tranquil. The Kurdish staff created an atmosphere that made the

Soldiers feel right at home. Afterward, Soldiers of 2-5 Cav. were offered Iraqi tea or Chai and continued to socialize among the organization's staff.

Horse Det. Troopers Instruct Iraqi Horse Handlers

By Staff Sgt. Sue German
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- Trading computers and badges for saddles and spurs has provided a welcome break for troopers of the 1st Cavalry Division's Horse Cavalry Detachment working with Saddam Hussein's former horses at the Baghdad Zoo.

After months of desk duty guarding the Division main headquarters building, the Soldiers recently had the opportunity to get back in the saddle, while also educating the horses' Iraqi handlers about suitable horse care and training techniques.

Before their deployment to Iraq, detachment Soldiers spent

their time performing at parades, rodeos and fairs throughout the United States. Daily duties included maintaining their herd of horses and mules, and equipment required for their performances. Some of the Soldiers are also trained saddlemakers, farriers (horseshoers), bootmakers and veterinarian technicians.

Staff Sgt. Robert Bussell, Headquarters deputy commandant, 1st Cavalry Division, is the platoon sergeant and saddlemaker for the detachment back at Fort Hood. Experience gained while growing up around horses on his grandparents' farm in eastern Texas coupled with his time at Fort Hood lends credence to the advice he passes on to the Iraqi veterinarians and caretakers. Because the horses belong to the state, it's up to the Iraqis to make the decisions on their care and handling, Bussell said.

"There's a lack of knowledge on some of the modern equine skills, such as medications, training techniques and doctrine that can be used for the animals," Bussell said. "We're trying to get them as much information as we can to make a better future for the animals and the people here."

At one time the horses numbered nearly 100, but traumatized by war their numbers have dwindled. The remaining horses were gathered up after the war was over, according to Bussell, and nineteen horses currently reside at the zoo.

Veterinarian Wasseem Wali,

has worked at the zoo for a year and with the Americans for the past six or seven months. Although his specialty is caring for the lions which also live at the zoo, he is learning about horses, and even pitches in to assist the stable help when necessary.

The horses were originally stabled at Camp Victory, with subsequent moves to Abu Ghraib, the University of Baghdad and their most recent home, the zoo. While a horse is not your typical zoo animal, Saddam's former horses are bidding their time surrounded by more common zoo inhabitants like camels and ostriches, until the time when more appropriate facilities can be built for them.

Long term plans include building a 100-stall stable, an exercise area and an equine education center in Baghdad.

"After these [new stables] are built, the situation will change for the better," Wali said. "I think the future will be good."

The Iraqis pored over several horse-themed magazines that Bussell brought with him, pointing at pictures of horses and equipment that interested them. Pictures are good when a language barrier impedes communication.

Detachment Soldiers make the trip to the zoo several times a week and are getting to know the horses better. "Because there is a language barrier, it's best sometimes that we just get hands on for ourselves - throw a saddle on them, get on and find out what level they've been put



Photos by Staff Sgt. Sue German, 122nd MPAD

Staff Sgt. Robert Bussell, deputy commandant, Commandants Office, 1st Cavalry Division, examines the nose of Al-Adul, a seven-year-old stallion which once belonged to Saddam Hussein and his family.

through," Bussell said. On this particular trip, they brought along a saddle and bridle. Being able to ride the horses was an added bonus, an activity they hadn't enjoyed since being deployed earlier this year.

On a smaller scale, but one that will add to the horses' safety and comfort, detachment Soldiers have built one of several planned pens for two stallions previously tied up to trees in order to keep them separated.

Maad Amer Mohammad, manager of the original Genetic Arab Horses Generating Center, has worked in the center for over ten years and wants to see an increase in the number of horses. "By doing that, we can help other animal educators have horses with

original Arab characteristics, especially the male horses [to pass on the Arabian genes]," Mohammad said.

The Soldiers voiced their praise for a dappled gray stallion named Al-Adul, describing him as beautiful, strong and magnificent - a good horse for breeding purposes. The Iraqis preferred a smaller stallion which carried the traditional Arabian characteristics, including a narrow dished face, to breed for traditional Arab features.

"The horses are important to the Iraqi people, especially Arabian horses," Wali said. "Their history is with the Arabic people."

For additional Horse Cavalry Detachment information, see www.hood.army.mil/1cd_horsedet



Sgt. Scott Woodbury, farrier for the 1st Cav. Div.'s Horse Cavalry Det., adjusts the stirrups before veterinarian Wasseem Wali rides Al-Adul.

CA Soldiers Provide Rations to Local Iraqis

By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel
122nd MPAD

AL-TAMAR, Baghdad-- For residents of the Al-Tamar district of Baghdad, civil affairs projects such as sewage and electricity loom large in improving their daily existence. Projects of this scope and magnitude take time and effort and while they are important in building a positive relationship between citizens of Iraq and Multi-National Forces, their significance is diminished to a poverty stricken people with barely enough food to survive.

Combining their efforts, Soldiers of Teams Stryker and Falcon of the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion, 1st Battalion-12th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division visited residents of the Al-Tamar district of Baghdad to deliver food and cooking supplies, Sept 14.

"We're out here today," explained 2nd Lt. Kenneth Heebner, Information Operations Officer, 1-12 Cav, 1st BCT, 1st CD, "to bring humanitarian aid to the Iraqi citizens in our area of operations to help better their life and to increase positive attitudes towards Multinational Forces."

Members of the civil affairs

(Left) Sgt. Brian Carter, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-12 Cav, 1st BCT, 1st CD stands on the back of a LMTV (Light Mobile Tactical Vehicle) loading food items for delivery to the Al-Tamar district of Baghdad. The drop was the first the region had experienced and was part of a rotation by the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion to visit different regions within their area of operations.

teams coordinated with local leaders of the area to pre-select the most suitable location for the drop off site. As the LMTV (Light Mobile Tactical Vehicle) backed into the site dropping off its treasured load, Soldiers worked with members of the Iraqi National Guard to establish a security perimeter. Once the perimeter was established, families filed in one-by-one to receive a package.

"What we're delivering today is what we refer to as a roadie pack," noted Sgt. 1st Class Felipe Azua, Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge, Stryker Team, 478th Civil Affairs Battalion, 1-12 Cav, 1st CD. "Each package contains non-perishable food items such as sardines, jams and jellies, cooking lard, bags of beans and rice, a propane stove



Photos by Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

and pots and pans to cook them in."

Azua explained that one of the keys to the rations was that the items were non-perishable.

"Al-Tamar is such a poor region that most people here have neither electricity nor a refrigerator. But even when we deliver food to areas with power we still stick with the dry goods, all and all it works out better," he said.

While some Soldiers distributed food items, other Soldiers worked to entertain the children that invariably gather during such operations. Passing out candy, crayons and amusing them with magic tricks, children were entertained for over an hour waiting for their parents to collect a package and call them home.

Noting that previously, this region had not received any food drops, Azua explained the importance of these quick impact, highly visible projects.

"When you work on larger projects," said Azua "people of an area don't have as much of an opportunity to see us (Multi-



(Above) A little girl from the Al-Tamar district of Baghdad fills a bag with canned sardines as part of what is referred to as a Roadie pack. Families of the region were given non-perishable items such as the sardines and jams, jellies, flour, cooking lard and had the choice of either beans or rice.

National Forces) and they tend to take for granted things like sewage and electricity once they are working. Being out here with children laughing and playing with the Soldiers, families getting food, they see that and they remember us. And they do

remember us, when we come back through an area we've visited, people waive and smile and giving us the thumbs-up sign. It goes a long way to counter some of the disinformation that has been spread about Multi-National Forces."

Azua went on to note that changing the view towards Multi-National Forces to a more positive light helps reduce the influence organizations such as Muqtada's Militia hold over people of the area.

"It's hard to convince someone that we (Multi-National Forces) are bad people when they see us giving out food and treating them with respect and dignity. When you get down to it," he explained, "that's what it's really all about, people just wanted to be treated with dignity and respect."



(Above) 2nd Lt. Kenneth Heebner, Information Operations Officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-12 Cavalry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, fills a bag with food for a family of the Al-Tamar district of Baghdad.

(Right) Handing a family a box of food, Heebner worked with Soldiers of the 478th Civil Affairs Team to bring Humanitarian Aid to the Al-Tamar district.



In Recognition

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2-162 Bids Farewell to Fallen Comrades

By Sgt. Merriion LaSonde
122nd MPAD

CAMP COOKE, Taji, Iraq-- "God we look to you for comfort and mercy as we gather to remember two of your sons, our brothers," said Chaplain Michael Moore, 1st Cavalry Division. "Grant that this memorial ceremony may celebrate their lives and that it might give us a safe place to grieve their deaths."

Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry and 1st Bn., 206th Field Artillery Regiment, 39th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cav. Div., paid tribute to two of their fallen troops during a memorial ceremony held Sept. 18th at Camp Cooke.

Staff Sgt. David Weisenburg, a Fire Support and Intelligence Non-Commissioned Officer, Weapons Squad Leader and Forward Observer and Spc. Benjamin Isenberg, a machine gunner and team leader, both of Bravo Co., lost their lives Sept. 13th to an Improvised Explosive Device.

"These two Soldiers not only fought bravely for the freedoms of the United States but also gave their lives in service to the nation of Iraq," said Lt. Col. Kieth Klemmer, 1-206 FA commander. "These Soldiers...represented the Army values and the warrior ethos in their purest form. Every



By Staff Sgt. Rebekah-mae Bruns, 39th BCT Public Affairs

A brother in arms clutches the dog tags of Staff Sgt. David Weisenburg and pays final respects. Weisenburg and Spc. Benjamin Isenberg from the 39th Brigade's, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, gave their lives in support of their unit.

day they patrolled the roads, the palm groves and the canals of Northern Baghdad. In order to prevent enemy forces from launching attacks against our convoys and ...our camps, they gave their lives...for their fellow Soldiers."

In a voice choked with emotion, Maj. Michael Warrington, 2-162 IN fire support officer, shared his personal feelings of

the loss of the two Soldiers.

"The experiences we share with those we love are so unique and personal that for me to convey my own to you will only do injustice to yours," Warrington said. "My memories of David Weisenburg are fond; his sincerity; his humble smile and resolute approach to the task before him; his confidence and positive attitude. There were moments he

inspired me and I miss him. Yet my grief pails in comparison to the pain a mother must feel at the irreplaceable loss of her child and I mourn for his family as well. In the family that is this brigade and this division, he continues to serve."

Capt. Damien San Miguel, Bravo Co. commander, went on to describe the notable attributes of the two fallen Soldiers and

how their loss would be felt throughout the company.

"[Weisenburg] assisted the platoon leader in preparing for patrols and coordinated with other units to ensure that everything was accomplished," San Miguel said. "[He] was a dedicated NCO and an example to others that followed him. He was there for his fellow FO's in the company and the Soldiers he patrolled with in 1st platoon. [Isenberg] was a driver for the platoon leader in 1st platoon. Every time I saw him, he was in a good mood, maintained a good attitude and was always helping out the platoon leader and platoon sergeant. He always had a smile on his face and conducted his job to the highest standard. [He] was a Soldier that a leader could depend on and a fellow Soldier that others could count on. [Weisenburg] and [Isenberg] put their families first and their fellow Soldiers always. No matter what the mission was or what time of day it was, they were there for the platoon. We as a company must continue to fight the fight. We will do it for [Weisenburg] and [Isenberg] and all other fallen Soldiers. We will remember them for what they are and what they always will be; American Soldiers that were ... there when their country called on them; heroes."

Eleven 39th BCT Soldiers Receive CIBs



Photos by Sgt. Merriion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

(Above) Eleven Soldiers in HHC received the Combat Infantryman's Badge for actions of eight and 19 April during which they reacted to direct and indirect fire when their convoy's came under attack by Anti-Iraqi Forces.

(Right) Brig. Gen. Ronald Chastain, Commander, 39th Brigade Combat Team, pins a combat infantryman's badge on Spc. Johnny Patrick, an infantryman with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 39th BCT. Eleven Soldiers in HHC received the badge for actions of eight and 19 April during which they reacted to direct and indirect fire when their convoy's came under attack by Anti-Iraqi Forces.



Our Fallen Troops

Sgt. Guy Stanley Hagy

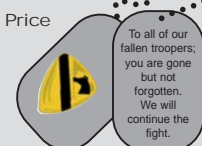
Sgt. Carl Thomas

Staff Sgt. David Weisenburg

Spc. Benjamin Isenberg

Sgt. Thomas Rosenbaum

Pfc. James Price



Thrills Aplenty in New Movie "Cellular"

The most refreshing aspect of New Line Cinema's new white-knuckle thriller "Cellular" is that the movie has no ambitions other than to be a "white-knuckle thriller."

Directed with ease by veteran second-unit director David R. Ellis (this is his second directing gig after helming "Final Destination 2"), the plot follows the kidnapping of biology teacher Jessica Martin (played by Kim Basinger) and her subsequent rescue by surfer-dude Ryan (Chris Evans).

Now, one may ask, how does a surfer dude come to the rescue of a kidnapped woman? Well that is the movie's gimmick. You see, Martin is locked in a room with only a broken telephone, but being the science whiz that she is, Martin manages to piece together parts of the phone and is able to dial-out by randomly clicking wires on the busted keypad together. The first number she is able to reach is Ryan's cell-phone, and while he at first believes it to be a prank, she manages to convince him otherwise.

Ryan at first runs to a police station, hoping that the police will help. But he obviously hasn't watched enough movies, because

LeDrew's Reviews

SPC Erik LeDrew



Movie Critic

the police in movies never help the hero. However, soon-to-be-retired (isn't that how it always works?) Police Sgt. Mooney, played by character-actor William H. Macy, heard enough to pique his curiosity so he eventually comes to the hero's aid, but not until after a whole lot of bad stuff happens.

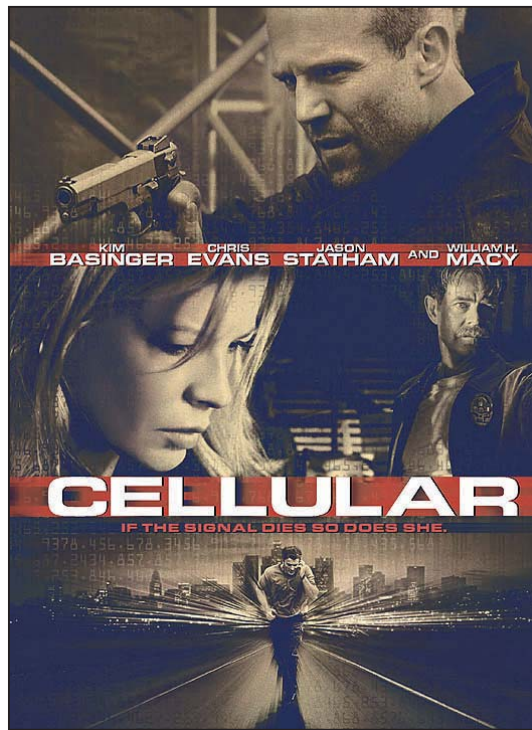
The movie's suspense comes largely from Ryan's efforts to keep his cell-phone's connection with Jessica open until he can figure out where she is being held at. Tunnels, stairwells, static interference and low-batteries all come into play at one point or another, and usually at the worst possible moment.

"Cellular"'s director, David Ellis, was a renowned action-scene director before he became a feature-film director, having directed the chase scene in "The Matrix Reloaded" and several of the battle

sequences in "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World" among many others, and his experience shines here. As previously said, this is a film that exists only to thrill; not to preach, not to teach, but to thrill. And thanks to David Ellis' considerable skills, the film moves at a break-neck pace, never pausing for sentimentality or for our characters to take a breath, and climaxes in a shoot-out wonderfully devoid of any over-the-top dramatics.

Another aspect that earns this film bonus points, is instead of an omni-prescient hero who knows everything and does everything according to a flawless plan, here we have a regular Joe that gets in way over his head, but manages to improvise his way around obstacles because he knows he is doing the right thing.

To be sure, "Cellular" is not a flawless movie. There are some coincidences that just seem too nicely timed and there are some groan-inducing one-liners as well. However, the movie moves at such a break-neck pace that these glitches quickly fall by the way-side and when it's over all we can think about is how much our hands hurt. White-knuckle indeed.



Columnist Still Leading the Way with NFL Picks

Flip a coin. Go ahead. The 50-50 potential is about how well I picked the first two weeks of National Football League games in this column.

Actually, I did manage to beat the guest prognosticator in the Aug. 20 edition, going 20-12 to Seattle-native Capt. Mark Favero's 18-14. Favero actually had 12 of 16 correct predictions in week one, but went 6-10 in week two. I, at least, managed to win more than I lost each week, but if I were in an office pool I'd still be going home a loser.

Let's talk surprises so far. The Jacksonville Jaguars are undefeated! The Falcons haven't lost yet! The Lions lead the NFC North Division! What is the world coming to? What next? Snow in Baghdad?!

I expected Green Bay to be unbeaten, too, and took a lot of ribbing when the Bears spoiled my beloved Packers' home opener 21-10. To make it worse, I heard it first from a Vikings fan! (Thank you, SPC. Peterson!)

As I write this column, the third week of the NFL season looms large. For week four picks, I've invited Sgt. Maj. John Pratt, the 1st Cavalry Division's operations sergeant major, to take his turn in the hot seat.



Sgt. Maj. John Pratt

Pratt is a Miami-native and huge Dolphins fan who recognizes that 2004 will not be a magical season for his fish.

"1972 ... that was a perfect year," Pratt reminisced. "This season, before Ricky Williams quit and David Boston got injured, I had the team picked to go to the Super Bowl. Now, we'll be lucky to get above .500."

Pratt, a former tailback and strong safety with Miami Central High School, expects his Dolphins to finish out this season at 7-9. Still, he's got them winning in both weeks three and four (hoping to even up their record at 2-2). Week four shapes up like this:

N.Y. Jets at Miami

Curtis Martin was leading the NFL in rushing after the first two

Trigger Pull

MSG David Larsen



Sports Buff

weeks! (Surprise!) Can he grind it out against the Dolphins on the road? I say yes to a Jets road win; the Sergeant Major stays loyal to his roots.

Cincinnati at Pittsburgh

We both like the Steelers at home against the Bingles, er, I mean the Bengals.

New England at Buffalo

Calling this his upset of the week, Pratt takes Buffalo at home to beat the world champions. I've seen the stat line on Drew Bledsoe and the Buffalo offense, and they are not living up to pre-season expectations. I say the Pats win in a walk.

Oakland at Houston

The Texans were supposed to be "much improved" this year according to a lot of pre-season football geniuses (myself included). They lost their opener to San Diego! Still, Pratt takes the Texans at home. I don't. The Raider Nation wins on the road.

Washington at Cleveland

Which Redskin team will show up? Good or bad? I say they win in Cleveland. The Sergeant Major takes the home team again.

New Orleans at Arizona

I take the (high) road team again. Pratt takes the Cardinals in the desert. Neither team is very good. Actually, we both flipped a coin on this one.

St. Louis at San Francisco

We both like the 49ers at home against the Rams, who have underachieved in the first two weeks of this season. Ken Dorsey looks like the "next great quarterback" in the bay area.

Indianapolis at Jacksonville

Both teams started out the season 2-0. Indianapolis is for real; the Jaguars are not. We both pick Indy.

N.Y. Giants at Green Bay

No questions here, either: we both like the Pack at home this week.

Philadelphia at Chicago

Donavan McNabb-to-Terrell Owens is looking like magic for the Eagles. Who quarterbacks for the Bears again? At home or not, we both think Philly will put the smack down on Chicago.

Atlanta at Carolina

I like the way Michael Vick

is playing, so I'm taking the Falcons on the road. The Sergeant Major is taking the Panthers at home.

Denver at Tampa Bay

John "Chuckie" Gruden's Buccaneers started off this year 0-2. Chuckie hates to lose! We both take Gruden's crew over the visiting Broncos.

Tennessee at San Diego

In another "upset special" pick, Pratt said the Chargers will prevail at home this week. I don't think so.

Kansas City at Baltimore

Monday Night Football comes to the Inner Harbor. I picked the Chiefs to win the whole she-bang in the pre-season. They've looked pretty bad, starting out 0-2. Still, I'll stick with them, hoping they win this one on the road. The Sergeant Major (smartly) takes the home favorite.

You gotta love sports. Where else can you disagree with a sergeant major and get away with it? I only agreed with my guest picker on six games, while disagreeing on eight. Time will tell who gets the bragging rights.

We're still looking to line up guest NFL prognosticators. Interested? E-mail me at david.j.larsen@1cd.army.mil.

Go Packers!